



## CASE STUDY

# After Sales Coaching

Vehicle repair and maintenance in the commercial automotive sector is a high-pressure field. Since workshops are essentially service providers catering to clients who are also service providers, urgency around every repair or maintenance task is the norm. With a shortage of qualified technicians and a high volume of trucks requiring attention, European workshops struggle to maintain efficient processes and procedures while meeting constant high demand.

### Initial Situation

One of Europe's foremost commercial vehicle manufacturers and the market leader for a quarter of a century found that it was not immune to current industry challenges. Its results in a UK market research survey on the quality of services and repairs distributed to all truck manufacturers indicated areas in need of improvement, specifically workshop capacity and turnover speed.

For solutions, the company turned to DEKRA, a trusted partner and advisor that had helped them optimize in other areas in the past. DEKRA was tasked with leading a pilot project at two workshop locations. Our expert set to work addressing practices and procedures that impact **workshop efficiency** to help our client reach its improvement goals.

### Our Contribution

Following a presentation to familiarize the client with the After Sales Coaching, our consultant spent 3 days shadowing people in different positions to understand how they work and identify ways to ease workflows and boost performance.

At the end of the observation period, we presented our findings to the management team, listing and prioritizing solutions, starting with simple changes with big impacts. We helped leadership focus in on meaningful KPIs in order to measure progress. The pilot project extended over 7 months. One day per month our consultant was on-site to encourage and monitor implementation. We supplemented these in-person visits with support via phone and email.

The central issue and primary commodity in the workshop environment is time, which presents a greater challenge when manpower is in short supply. Our expert was able to bring a fresh perspective and extensive experience to the pilot project site, identifying the cracks in practices and procedures where valuable time slipped through.

He found that shift patterns had drifted, for example, so that at times 50% more technicians were on the clock than there were work bays available. A review of shift allocation and a more rigorous overview of scheduling processes was the solution.

Technicians were also being tasked with locating and often unblocking the vehicles they were assigned to work on, traversing vast parking lots and spending 2,475-man hours per year (or 124K pounds in losses) to do so. Employing a parking attendant to take on this responsibility was a sound investment.

Waiting on parts was costing 1,237 hours per year—usually the result of incomplete or incorrect booking information or haphazard planning. Our expert helped implement a part pre-picking system to cut waste and streamline technicians' workflows.

We were able to help our client in countless other ways, from encouraging check-ins with technicians to keep repair times on schedule, to punctual review of visit reports so that work is done and invoiced in a timely manner, to identifying specializations and training gaps in the workforce and simplifying reporting practices to increase accuracy.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive along the way. When asked to comment on the progress being made, supervisors reported that “the team have embraced the coaching” and “everyone is working

[together] without any pushback.” Not only the approach, but the consultant, too received praise as “a positive influencer for change” and “entirely the right person to be carrying out this program.”

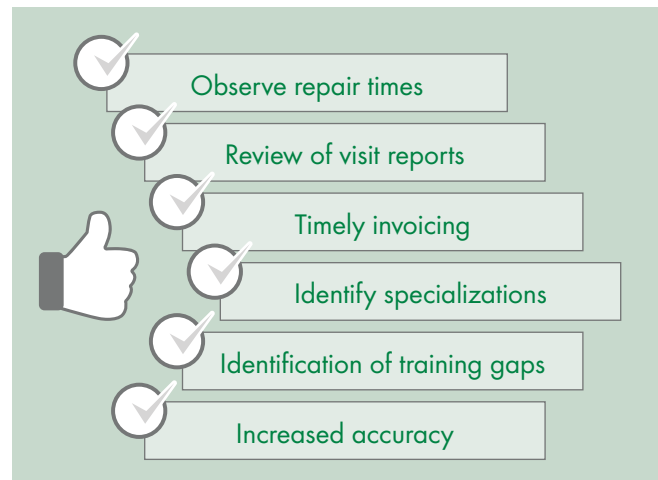


Figure 1: Making a positive impact with the DEKRA After Sales Coaching

## Project Results

By the end of the pilot, efficiency (jobs completed) was up 5.9% and productivity (time blocks removed) was up 6.3%. Also contributing to increased margins, overtime dropped by at least 20% and factors such as ROS (Return on Sales) and labor GM% (Gross Margins) both improved. Even more important for sustainable change, there were positive gains in morale as the daily workflow ran more smoothly and conflicts became rare.

Indeed, the pilot project was so successful, the client was enthusiastically on board for phase two. Nine dealers are currently participating in the **After Sales Coaching** spanning locations in the UK and across Europe. More are expected to join in this year.

## DEKRA Business Consulting

For companies in the automotive sector committed to improving sales performance and customer satisfaction, DEKRA Business Consulting combines industry expertise and experience with innovation and adaptability. Our approach meets the challenges of an evolving market and a dynamic consumer landscape. Looking back on over twenty years of successful collaboration with the auto industry, we share our knowledge and engage fully with innovations and technologies that are shaping the future. Our vision empowers our partners to transform, adapt and thrive.

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